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UNCLAS MASERU 000532

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR IO; AF/S; AF/RSA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ETRD PREL SCUL LT UNESCO

SUBJECT: URGENT DEMARCHE ON UNESCO CULTURAL DIVERSITY VOTE

REF: (A) STATE 192656 (B) STATE 184292 (C) MASERU 506

¶1. (SBU) Ambassador delivered reftel demarches October 18 and 19 to Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Sekatle. As Minister for Local Government, Dr. Sekatle was not fully aware of our October 7 discussion on the Cultural Diversity Convention with Foreign Minister Moleleki (although she had received a briefing from the A/PS (MFA)).

¶2. (SBU) The A/FOMIN understood the key point that instructions indicated in Ref C had, apparently, not been received by the Lesotho delegation in Paris. We urged reissuance of instructions based on the GOL's stated concurrence with postponement. Dr. Sekatle said she would bring the matter to the Prime Minister's attention as the Foreign Minister is traveling in Asia.

¶3. (SBU) On October 19, we provided MFA and A/FonMin additional letter and points seeking public expression of concern during the October 20 UNESCO plenary. Due to A/FonMin's absence throughout most of the day, we also engaged Trade Minister Malie who understood the need for quick action. He apprised the A/PS - MFA of the need for prompt instructions to Paris. (Note: DCM spoke with A/PS - MFA who indicated that instructions had been delivered to Lesotho's Ambassador Kikine in Paris. However, the A/PS believed the Education Ministry's Principal Secretary, not Kikine, had actually cast the vote in UNESCO. It is unclear whether the Education PS actually received the instructions. We have asked at both Ministerial and PS levels that the GOL follow up with its delegation today. We understand Amb. Kikine is now in Berlin, but is trying to reach the GOL delegation members in Paris to ensure they have received the instruction from capital.

¶4. (U) Further responses will be conveyed to Paris and Washington as soon as determined.

PERRY